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Grand Prix highlights re-lived...

Ray Archer's 'capture' of Tommy Searle in action for the GP of Trentino (a former OTOR cover shot) kicks off our best photo selections covering MXGP, MotoGP and AMA SX/MX for 2013 inside what is the last OTOR of the year







All sides down...

Martin Heath spotted this incredible angle on LCR Honda's Stefan Bradl at Catalunya this summer. Here is what he had to say on the pic: "How low can you go? The latest Bridgestone tyres now almost give shoulder-down capability. Bradl was the most extreme. He was genuinely gob-smacked when he saw the image!"





Not taken for Granted...

Simon Cudby picked up a number of decent whips across this jump at Washougal for round eight of twelve in the Lucas Oil Pro National Motocross series but JGR Yamaha's Josh Grant gets the double page wrap for this 'upside-downer'





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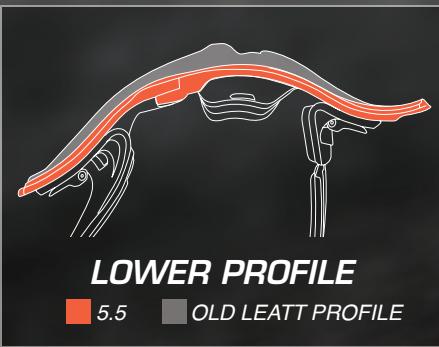



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FEATURE



DNF
12th
10th
9th
8th
6th
9th
8th
DNF

38

BREAKING-IN

38

38

BRAID

8th
DNF
9th
11th
7th
7th
6th
8th
7th

38

BRADLEY SMITH



By Adam Wheeler, Photos by www.tech3.fr

DID BRITAIN'S MOST SUCCESSFUL EVER ROOKIE IN THE PREMIER CLASS OF MOTOGP REALLY PLAY 'THIRD FIDDLE' IN 2013? BRADLEY SMITH TOOK IT ALL IN HIS STRIDE...AS HE EXCLUSIVELY TELLS OTOR

Four days after a friendly and enjoyable chat in the spacious confines of the Tech3 hospitality unit Bradley Smith is on his way to setting the second fastest lap-time of the first 2014 tests at Valencia. As a small 'doff of the cap' before the narrow winter break for MotoGP it was a gesture that caught a fair amount of attention. Smith hasn't always basked longingly in the limelight. Arguably the UK's brightest Grand Prix star towards the end of the last decade as he defied the Superbike route to the top level and broke through via the 125s, Smith's ascent to second place in the championship in 2009 was clouded by the arrival of James Toseland and then outgoing team-mate Cal Crutchlow in MotoGP. At times Scott Redding was also chipping away at any recognition Smith had built up, especially with

the motocross-obsessed racer having a quiet Moto2 campaign in 2012. This year it was Marc Marquez who blazed the rookie trail in MotoGP while Smith's 116 admirable points quietly set another benchmark. The Valencia lap was a small teaser of a potential tide-change. At the age of 23 the scene is now set for the Yamaha rider to ascend to somewhere near his peak in 2014. With Moto2 Champion Pol Espargaro inheriting his role as 'team junior' Smith can move into Crutchlow's shoes; not only in terms of his motorcycle and support from the French set-up but as the focus of the UK's fervent following. Articulate, chatty and with the air of having negotiated countless interviews since he entered GP seven seasons before, Brad is more than happy to spill the beans on a pleasing, platform-building year...

The book is closing on 2013. What word springs to mind when it comes to a review?

Erm, 'crazy', really, considering how much has happened since the first time I rode the bike. Normally I have a great memory of what I did at every racetrack and how the season has gone but for some reason this year just seems like a blur. I don't know if it just because of all the information I've processed and different stuff I've had to learn but it is hazy. Usually I could tell you what I did in each session, where I made mistakes and what-have-you...but it has all flown by so quickly. I'm a bit sad that 2013 is coming to an end because over the last few weekends we definitely made some progress. Anyway it has been eventful and I'm pleased with the outcome.

That 'blur'...is it also because of the demands of MotoGP? Not just on the bike but also off it with things like personal appearances, media debriefs and so on...?

I think a lot has contributed to it. Not only have the race weekends been busy but there has

been more demand in my life away from the racetrack. I moved to Andorra this year and I'm away from home more. You realise how many things you have to take care of! And also how much your family do for you. I've been travelling a lot. I stayed in America, in France and also Italy so it has been a busy time. Although I cannot remember too much of it right now I am actually quite refreshed. I'm not 'glad' that we've reached the end of the season, so I think my preparation and the way to do things has been the right way for me. I'll just have to look at the pics and videos to remind me of how it has gone!

So, overall, a 'big' year...

Yes. A big one. I was a bit nervous going into it. I also wasn't very sure that this was the right time to be moving away from home but it all seems to have worked out very well. Progress on the track has helped with that. People inside the Tech3 team have been happy with how I have been getting on. Also Yamaha are happy. It has been a successful.

BRADLEY SMITH





How are you finding Andorra? A lot of driving from Barcelona airport...

Yes, unfortunately that is a pain in the arse but it is such a cool lifestyle. I have some friends over there like James Duxbury, Leon Camier, Broc Parkes and Cyril Despres [multiple Dakar winner]. It seems like an 'outdoor', active and motivated country. Everyone seems to be out training or the gyms feel like they are full. You can go and climb or trek in the mountains or go out on your trial or motocross bike. There's go-karting and even a freestyle park where you can throw your BMX into a foam pit. There is plenty to do and it feels like a big kids' playground! It is a cool place to hang out and a healthy place to live.

Mentioning Cyril...he's a Yamaha rider now. It must be a bit daunting if he calls you up for a bit of off-roading...

Ha! If Cyril says we're going motocrossing then no problem at all. If he says we're doing enduro or trail riding then I'm like 'no, I think you can go by yourself!' It is cool to surround yourself with talented, like-minded people. I think if you want to be near the front or top of what you do then you need to be around people like that, who are really motivated and will bring out the best of you...I think that is what Andorra does for me.

You know the sport so how were the circumstances for your debut MotoGP year? You could say that Cal overshadowed you a bit in the garage but then being his team-mate allowed you to operate under the radar slightly. Other Brits have had to cope with a harsher spotlight...

It's been perfect really. Cal hit the pre-season tests so hard and so well that he took all the limelight and I was just able to get on with it. It was very tough at the beginning of the year because I made some mistakes and had some injuries but Cal just carried the English wave and the expectation of the team and sponsors. From the team's point of view they could see the separate journeys we were taking and they knew they had a rookie as one of their riders. It has been nice in the second part of the season to close the gap on him. It was always something that I knew I would need to do. I probably didn't expect a situation like Japan where I was in front of him for half of the race to happen so soon. It's nice to have gotten closer to him before he jumps off to ride the Ducati...well see what next year brings.

There is a distinction by MotoGP statistician Martin Raines that you are the highest points scoring Brit in his debut year in the premier class. Maybe in another season, and without

Crutchlow around or Scott Redding going for the Moto2 title, a bigger deal would have been made of that...

I think so. I reckon the expectations of the British fans are now much higher compared to say what they were in 2008. That year I finally stuck it on Pole in the 125s and in 2009 I was battling for second in the world championship. Ever since then we've had guys winning races, getting on podiums and Cal doing his MotoGP thing. It has gone super-sky-high. The increased expectation can be difficult to deal with but if we want to be successful in the UK, like we were in the past and like we still are in World Superbike, then the expectation has to grow and the riders need to step up to that. We are a nation that should be able to race motorcycles just as fast as any other. What Cal has done will lead the way for Scott and I to continue to push against and raise the bar. Maybe, like you say, I haven't had the recognition this year but I only plan to improve over the next few seasons.

People also forget there is four-five years age difference between you and Cal...

Yes, but then Marquez has come in this year and blown the rookie rule out of the window. Stefan Bradl did an awesome job last year and probably the best by a rookie for quite a long time. It also gave Moto2 riders back some credit in terms of their potential for MotoGP, because after Toni Elias in the past we've been shadowed-out a little bit. At the beginning I thought Moto2 was going to get a bad name for itself and it would be thought that no rider could move up but Stefan's good job helped with that. Anyway, with Marc coming in the same season as me I was always going to be overshadowed. He has beaten everybody else as well, so if I am the bad person who cannot run with him them everybody is bad! Which is obviously not the case...

Coming into MotoGP have you felt more recognition and elevation of your profile or is there not much difference from what you were doing and achieving in 125s and Moto2?

Unfortunately I think I did such a good job

back in the 125 days and was hitting the podium week-in week-out; the coverage that this drew actually boosted my profile more than being in MotoGP has. Hmm, I do notice that people take me a bit more seriously now. If I say I ride in MotoGP and the actual premier class there is a glimmer of recognition there. Also if I can say I am posting top ten results and ranking in the top ten in the world then that is also a pretty cool thing and people do take that more seriously. I'm not in the junior ranks any more. Certainly when you are on the TV and they see you fighting – like I was doing for fourth place in the first laps in Motegi and also in Australia – then there is more attention. Saying that I think unless I can sneak into the top five or six then it doesn't cut it because nobody sees what you are doing in eighth position.

Do you ever get the feeling that time is so short here? It seems like you have to grab what you can in MotoGP...but on the other side you see riders like Nicky Hayden and Colin Edwards enjoying sustained careers at the top level. Does it dwell on your mind that you cannot really afford to 'drop the ball'?

Yeah, but it has been the same deal ever since I was in 125s. I was rookie of the year in my first season and made four points scoring finishes which, at that time, wasn't a bad effort and I was on a Honda that perhaps wasn't the best bike...but still I nearly didn't get a ride for 2007 and that was tough. It has always been a catfight. Even at the end of 2010 I had been second the year before and suddenly it was really hard to get into Moto2. Tech3 was the only team really interested in taking me for 2011 and it turned out it was the best decision I could have made and now I'm with them for five years. It is quite scary but I imagine it is the same at the top end of any business or industry or whatever; at the end of the day if you cannot do the job then you are going to be kicked out. One of my pet hates is incompetence. If you cannot do that job, then you shouldn't have it. That's the same in MotoGP. If you are not good enough to be there then don't take the seat from someone else.

“There could be a possible factory spot at the end of '14. You want to be in that shop window as the one that everybody wants...”



BRADLEY SMITH



PLAY

By that same token maybe politics, nationalities and 'face-fitting' buys extra time...

It does, absolutely, and I'm sure I would like to take the salary for another year instead of handing my spot over to someone else but my mentality is that you have to earn your slot and continue to do so. Politics will always come into it, but that's just a way of life.

In 2014 the dynamic of the team will change a bit. You will in some senses swap roles with Pol Espargaro. How do you feel about that? How do you feel about him?

It is quite weird to be honest to start to think that I am the one expected to get the better results, especially when you are talking about the Tech3 satellite Yamaha team and following the finishes that Cal has managed. But I have been feeling confident with the last few results and performances that I can be closer to him and knowing that I can be closer to Stefan and Bautista, which realistically are the main points of focus for next year. Pol is someone I have raced against since 2005 and we have known each other a long time. I have beaten him and he has beaten me across numerous years. I'm really quite excited to have a team-mate where there will be a bit of a rivalry between us. I would like to think we are on a similar level and it will be good to have some fights like Cal and Andrea [Dovizioso] did in 2012. I think that will continue to lift both of our games and get us closer to the factory bikes. Maybe it won't happen at the beginning of the year but I don't know how Pol will adapt and how confident he will be coming off a Moto2 championship full of confidence. MotoGP is something else altogether. Knowing he is also a Yamaha rider it will give that extra little bit of motivation to get in front of him with a view to a possible factory spot if that comes around at the end of '14. You want to be in that shop window as the one that everybody wants.

I need to keep eeking out those extra tenths every second and it will make the difference throughout the year. I think it will be good.

On a scale of 1-10 how happy are you with your career and circumstances as 2013 comes to a close?

I think I'm on a good stepping stone for next year and I have created a solid platform going into 2014. I cannot say I am over-the-moon with my results from this season but I am content with what I have been able to achieve and what I have learnt. I know next year is absolutely massive for me and I need to hit the tests as hard as I possibly can and then that momentum will filter through. I have to work hard this winter to be ready to take the opportunity. I'm quite excited about it. I'll say a solid '7'. I'm not throwing 2013 up into the 9s but a 7 will do.

I'm not going to let you escape without asking about motocross. Been riding or watching much?

I have got myself a 450 Yamaha...

So you've moved up from the 250s?

Yeah, just because of MotoGP! For me the 250 was too slow in the end and I could ride it too hard. For MotoGP I needed something that would rip my arms off and would make me think about my riding and how I use the throttle – which is something you have to do in MotoGP – so I'm enjoying the 450.

Would you go for a Rinaldi YRRD kit or a Cosworth one?

Probably a Rinaldi...I'm a bit scared of the Cosworth stuff! I've got the same Talon wheels that the Cosworth guys run, those ones with the carbon hubs, so I'm styling it out a bit more. I have the Rinaldi sticker kit so I'm 50-50! I think I'll be mixing the motocross with some skiing and other stuff around Andorra and Catalunya this winter.

BRADLEY SMITH



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What make of motorcycle does
James Stewart ride?

- A) Kawasaki
- B) Yamaha
- C) Suzuki

We'll contact the winner after one week
for their details. Good luck!

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OTOR



BREAK WITH NO RESPITE

By Gavin Emmett

For many of those involved in MotoGP™, myself included, the testing ban during December and January means a downing of the heavy tools and a much quieter couple of months, which gives us chance to reflect on the year past and the year to come.

However, those of us allowed that luxury have to spare a thought for those others who have already grafted 24/7 for the whole of this year but will get no break whatsoever, as they spend the off-season working around the clock to get their machines ready for 2014.

Surprisingly it is perhaps the toughest part of the year, with much of the hard work unable to be properly verified until testing starts once again in Malaysia in February, and by then it could be too late to rectify anything before the start of the new season.

Honda and Yamaha will not be resting on their laurels this winter as each knows the other will be striving to find that extra edge heading into the 20-litre era. On the surface Yamaha are the ones who need to close the gap; despite having won half the races this season the M1 needs work to get the most out of the new fuel limits.

Ducati meanwhile clearly will be toiling morning, noon and night under the watchful eye of their new General Manager Gigi dall'Igna who is tasked with turning around the flailing Italian factory's fortunes. The arrival of Cal Crutchlow, who repeated the gripes of Andrea Dovizioso behind-the-scenes, gives fresh impetus to the project and the Brit has been told he will have

a completely new machine at his disposal come February. That means Christmas is cancelled at Borgo Panigale.

The factories generally rely on huge workforces, less so at Ducati, but the 'Open' teams have to do all the work themselves. Some will be in higher spirits as they undertake preparations with the new machines, Forward Racing in particular who saw some stunning results from their new Yamaha hybrid in post-season tests.

The mix of raw pace from Aleix Espargaro and vast development experience from Colin Edwards will have given Forward, FTR and Yamaha more than enough data to be improving things even further before the laps restart in the New Year.

Conversely, the Honda customer bike didn't have quite the impact that Shuhei Nakamoto suggested it might as it hit the track with the likes of Nicky Hayden, Hiro Aoyama and Scott Redding. Nonetheless Aspar, Gresini and Cardion AB will be liaising closely with the factory back in Japan over what modifications need making before they take delivery of their Open package for 2014 in February.

We are still to find out what Aprilia will be doing in 2014, but if their proposed 2016 return is to be realised, then they need to provide the PBM squad with something improved for next season, whilst the other Open teams will use the winter months sussing out their final package of riders and bikes. A tense few weeks lie ahead for all.

'13 BEST OFs

A trek through some of the more memorable moments and images as chosen by the professionals that saw and captured them in 2013. Kicking off the section is Martin Heath's view of MotoGP...



PLAY

IVECO TT ASSEN ASSEN, JUNE

The eyes have it from Crutchlow...

Heath: "Wet session, clear visor shows his race face and the zone the riders get into once the visor snaps shut."







FEATURE

IVECO TT ASSEN ASSEN, JUNE

Lorenzo takes to the track in the same weekend as surgery...

Heath: "Jorge Lorenzo leaving the scrum starting warm-up a day after smashing his collarbone and resulting operation."



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FEATURE



BWIN GRAND PRIX CESKE REPUBLIKY BRNO, AUGUST

Marquez takes his fifth win of six in 2013...
Heath: "My favourite portrait of Marc this year.
An expert shot with the bubbly too!"



40

FEATURE





GRAN PREMIO BWIN DE ESPANYA JEREZ, MAY

The first thrusts of the Marquez/Lorenzo duel...
Heath: "Closing laps as the riders enter 'the zoo'; the packed last stadium section that saw record crowds return this year."



FEATURE

IVECO TT ASSEN ASSEN, JUNE

Valentino Rossi takes his first win since 2010...
Heath: "Post race press conference after his
victory."





MOTORRAD GRAND PRIX DEUTSCHLAND SACHSENRING, JULY

Iannone wrecks the Ducati...

Heath: "This was during the opening minutes of FP1 at the fearsome 'waterfall' downhill fast right at the back of the paddock. A cold right side of tyre always catches a few out especially when it's a vague feeling front end found on the Ducati. Notice how the swingarm has snapped in half! Ducati said it was the first time they had seen that happen! Dovi had trashed his only 'lab bike' seconds before at the same spot.

2013 BEST MotoGP IMAGES





FEATURE

GRAN PREMI APEROL DE CATALUNYA CATALUNYA, JUNE

Espargaro sees the light...

Heath: "The Catalunya silverware can leave you in a reflective mood!"





HERTZ BRITISH GRAND PRIX SILVERSTONE, AUGUST

Scott shows his true colours...

Heath: "Loved this colour scheme. Nicknamed Scott the 'Milkman' because he always delivers at home! Massive Silverstone crowd, home race winner, goose bumps!"





10

FEATURE



PLAY

BWIN GRAND PRIX CESKE REPUBLIKY BRNO, AUGUST

Penny for your thoughts?

Heath: "Empty press room moments after everybody had left from a qualification conference. Marc went from laughing and joking to suddenly being miles away day dreaming..."





2013 BEST MotoGP IMAGES

MOTORRAD GRAND PRIX DEUTSCHLAND SACHSENRING, JULY

Rossi still full of spark at round eight... Heath: "Shot during the sat qualifying. I noticed that from one lap in about six VR was dragging his right elbow around the Castrol Omega corner, throwing up some sparks from his Dainese titanium elbow pad. After managing to get something on one lap while panning a much bigger shower of sparks was thrown-up, resulting in this image. I thought about it afterwards and realised Rossi could have possibly been in the process of folding the front and had actually saved the crash with his right knee and elbow hence the bigger shower show! A few laps later Stefan Bradl did the same thing but was unable to save the front and washed out."



PLAY

ALL SHOT USING:

Canon 1D mk2n bodies, Canon 500/4 mk2, Canon 70-200/2.8, Canon 16-35/2.8, Canon 14/2.8, Canon x1.4 converter, Canon 580 EXII flash
For further pictures and information check out:
www.martinheathphoto.com



GP GENERALI DE LA COMUNITAT VALENCIANA RICARDO TORMO, NOVEMBER

Lorenzo already starts 2014 work...

Heath: "Last few minutes of 2013 testing for MotoGP prototypes. Weather was amazing at Valencia. This is actually a dark tint visor Jorge has. It shows how strong and low the sun is at 5pm local time."

MARTIN HEATH
PHOTOGRAPHY





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SCOTT



FEATURE

GRAND PRIX OF THE NETHERLANDS VALKENSWAARD, APRIL

Evgeny Bobryshev clearly on the gas riding the factory CRF450R. 2013 was the third season for the Russian with the works Italian set-up



‘13 BEST OFs

Ray Archer covered all seventeen rounds of the FIM Motocross World Championship that was a Red Bull KTM showcase of speed, skill and campaign-cunning. Here the veteran Geordie photographer reveals his favourite pick of a large bunch...



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FEATURE



GRAND PRIX OF TRENTO ARCO DI TRENTO, APRIL

It was hard to find a more stunning backdrop to Grand Prix than that at Arco in the heart of the Dolomite mountain range in northern Italy. The circuit was tight for GP spec but the public filled the small enclosures and Tony Cairoli duly delivered. In this MX2 start it is clear to see that Herlings has nailed the gatedrop





MOTOCROSS OF NATIONS TEUTSCHENTHAL, GERMANY, SEPTEMBER

Under public glare. There were not many places for Ken Roczen to hide in front of a keen and expectant crowd at Teutschenthal. The German's fight with Eli Tomac was the highlight of the weekend





GRAND PRIX OF GERMANY

LAUSITZRING, JULY

The temporary track in the Lausitzring motor racing complex had its critics and the weekend was searing hot but that didn't stop the Red Bull KTM MX2 duo from playing around on some of the vast jumps. Herlings scrubs under Tixier here



PLAY







FEATURE

GRAND PRIX OF BENELUX LIEROP, SEPTEMBER

A resurgent Ken De Dycker wasn't the star of the last Grand Prix of the season but the year had represented an efficient comeback for the Belgian. His starts often prevented a consistent podium charge and here he was eating sand

2013 BEST MXGP IMAGES





GRAND PRIX OF BRAZIL BETO CARRERO, MAY

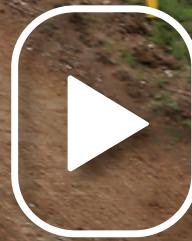
The distinct – and wet! – red mud of Beto Carrero is quite unmistakable. The factory Suzukis were alarmingly good out of the gate throughout the season and this was one of Clement Desalle's [25] fortés

2013 BEST MXGP IMAGES



ENDURO

FEATURE



PLAY

GRAND PRIX OF ITALY MAGGIORA, JUNE

Cairolì drives up the first part of the vast Maggiora hill watched by one of the largest Grand Prix audiences in recent memory. Great weather, a frantic battle for victory and riders enjoying the historic hardpack; it was the best race of the year







FEATURE

MOTOCROSS OF NATIONS TEUTSCHENTHAL, GERMANY, SEPTEMBER

Although Ryan Dungey will not mark the 2013 Motocross of Nations as one of his greatest races the super-smooth KTM rider is always a study of speed and style. Crucially for the Americans he is also one of the keenest to represent his country





PLAY

GRAND PRIX OF BENELUX LIEROP, SEPTEMBER

The face says it all really. Shaun Simpson provides one of the best stories of the season, of any season, with his surprising but emotionally-charged victory in the Dutch sand. The final - and worthy winner - of the MX1 era

0

FEATURE

2013 BEST MXGP IMAGES



GRAND PRIX OF GREAT BRITAIN MATTERLEY BASIN, AUGUST

If there is one image that epitomises the brute potential of Steve Dixon's Cosworth-powered Yamaha YZ250Fs then this is it. Dean Ferris on full blast, leading, at the team's home Grand Prix. The speed of the bike helped the Australian to a breakthrough term and then a factory Red Bull KTM saddle in the USA



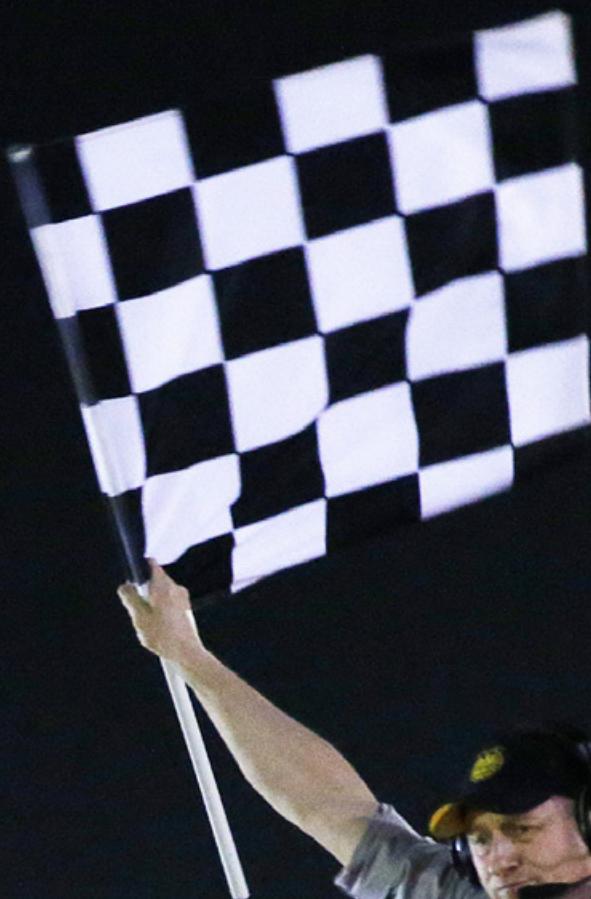


FEATURE



GRAND PRIX OF QATAR LOSAIL, MARCH

The first time for Grand Prix under the Qatar lights gives a special glean to the show. It was a TV spectacle but a novel and enjoyable way to start the FIM series. This is Glenn Coldenhoff who would be one of two Dutch winners in 2013



ALL SHOT USING:

Canon EOS1DX, 300mm f2.8, 70-200mm f2.8, 16-35mm f2.8, 14mm f2.8, 15mm f2.8, Flashgun EX600RT, 1.4x converter.

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James Stewart ride?

- A) Kawasaki
- B) Yamaha
- C) Suzuki

We'll contact the winner after one week
for their details. Good luck!

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LAST THOUGHTS...

By Adam Wheeler

For a while now the debate behind awning 'doors' in the MXGP paddock has been about the status quo and how the direction of the FIM Motocross World Championship is sprinting off into a murky distance. The long-standing view is how riders outside of the narrow elite can make a decent wage and more importantly how teams can complete a full international and national schedule as well as pay worthy coin to their athletes.

For numerous years I've heard the cry of teams pleading for help, assistance, recognition and with good cause. MotoGP and F1 can sustain an eighteen-twenty race calendar as a slither of the money is fed back into the paddock (which spawns its own political burrowed land) and this is something that needs to be implemented but is simply not yet possible in motocross. Youth-stream are making gestures for travel support and I can only hope the allure for overseas races grows and they can increase their policy in this respect. The day that teams embrace travel to Qatar and Thailand with the same enthusiasm and practical approach as two far-flung European trips will be a good one because it means the evolution of the FIM world championship is gaining momentum. I trust it will come soon.

It is interesting therefore to read revered promoter Eric Peronnard's twist on the subject in this issue. The Frenchman points the finger instead at teams' outlay and emphasis on a promotional 'face' rather than keeping the race operation simple and investing in talent. Perhaps his argument about the necessity of a race truck is a little skewed. Semis not only house numerous bikes and components (in some cases tyres) but also 'hotel' the mechanics

whom largely live on the road between events. It is a multi-purpose vehicle and the central hub of a team, rather than solely a moving billboard.

It is a rare case but someone like Steve Dixon invested in Dean Ferris for 2014 and has been left high-and-dry but still boasts a brand new infrastructure flanked by the might of Cosworth and has to be able to offer something to sponsors if he has been temporarily let down with his race plans. Suitable presentation is a slim crumb to retain and entice backers, a shot at the corporate game to seek funding. It is now a necessity on some level it seems. Maybe the majority of sponsors crave results and exposure (and this partially seems to have been the case with Monster Energy's transfer from Yamaha to Kawasaki) but there must be some that have other criteria (the Rockstar Energy Suzuki teams feel obliged to trail a small-ish hospitality unit to a percentage of GPs). Teams also don't want to give the impression of being a small fish in hope of one day snaring a large slice of bait. I'd like to think that a racer, his personality and potential, could be the main draw but the problem for teams is the short-term nature of that strategy. Injury or factory aspirations from their 'employee' can rapidly change the landscape and it can happen from one year to the next.

The final few lines to thank everyone who has clicked, looked, read or download OTOR through the 25 issues this year. We're finally moving towards a point where the magazine will take on a new form for tablet and computer viewing and the website is due an overhaul for some better mobile access. All this in a busy fourth year for us. Happy holidays and check back in for issue 71 right after Anaheim 1.

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FEATURE



IDEAL. MAKER

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Ray Archer

Eric Peronnard has had fingers in plenty of off-road racing pies. The 53 year old Frenchman, tanned, confident and approachable – all embellished traits of almost three decades residing in the United States – has grown a considerable and arching reputation as a ‘Mr Fix it’ when it comes to event promotion, consultation and getting wheels turning (in more ways than one).

You are unlikely to find anyone with a more robust and plentiful contact book in the motorcycle industry.

Some of his more public works have involved the creation of the U.S. Open (forebear to the Monster Energy Cup), Endurocross and the X Games insertion and the Paris Bercy Supercross but like a great ‘chêne’ tree, Peronnard’s roots and reach travel further and deeper into the scene. We quizzed him for some pearls of wisdom and also thoughts on some of the wider issues in dirt-bike racing...



I'm very satisfied but also very humbled by what I've achieved and there is still so much to do! I'm an ex-racer and just wanted to do positive things for the sport. I feel good about the opportunities I had to elevate motorcycling in many cases. I was just one of a team in helping something like Bercy become successful and I have no 'title' other than being somebody who just chipped in to play a part. Things like the U.S. Open and the Endurocross, the X Games are a bit different and I really was the father of those projects; it makes me feel good to see how much good for the sport those projects created.

I married a fantastic American girl and that was a big part of my success because she really helped me to understand and feel that connection to the U.S. I got to be accepted and understood by the American scene quicker. [being a foreigner] you have less strings attached. You basically have the freedom of less pressure because all your peers are not watching you. I think that gives more liberty. In '94 Moto Crampons [French magazine] did an article on Ludo, Marc [Boinnard and Blanchard, French entrepreneurs, the forces behind One Industries, initially, and 100%] and I and we were like the French connection in the U.S. and it is quite funny to look back now. Twenty years on we've all been successful.

I try as much as I can to be a nice person. It is a goal and my values are based around treating people the way I'd like to be treated. Without getting too deep and all that stuff I believe in goodness...but at the same time I'm not stupid! So it depends where you draw the line. I have respect for people and when it comes to athletes who are the stars of the show then it doesn't matter if they are the Trial World Champion or MotoGP Champion I don't care. I don't look at bike sport like a little tribe, it is a big one; Lorenzo is as unbelievable as Toni Bou or Taddy [Blazusiak] or [Justin] Barcia.

A race without injuries means a good weekend. Of course selling out the tickets and seeing the spectators enjoy themselves is exciting but every weekend that is injury-free is a good one. I feel very responsible at events and I want tracks at X Games and Endurocross with safety in mind, that is the number one priority. Sometimes it feels like an inch or foot can change the dynamic of a track. I was sadly involved in Doug Henry's last crash. That was at Daytona Beach and he was doing Supermoto and the AMA asked me to help them make it [the race meeting] happen. I didn't have involvement in anything technical but when that accident occurred I lost sleep for a long time because I had the feeling that I didn't do enough. Fortunately I had friends among the riders and people like Ricky Carmichael who assured me that I hadn't done anything wrong.

ERIC PERONNARD



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FEATURE



It is all about relationships. Through those you are able to keep going and to keep being successful. When I sold the U.S. Open to Feld – who used to be Clear Channel – in 2001 the big boss shook my hand and said ‘I’m buying a relationship here’ and for me it was kind of a life-defining moment. This guy was much older than me and worth hundreds of millions and he said he was not buying the race but the link, the relationship, and it’s true. If you are on time, you deliver and you don’t lie then you keep those relationships alive. Common sense is something you have or you don’t and then you have to work on the job...and learn from your mistakes because, trust me, I have made some mistakes! Learning from those is how you become successful. An example? I think one of the things I was conscious about was becoming ‘too American’. Obviously I’m living there and over time I felt that I lost a bit of global vision or perspective on how things should be done. Working with ESPN last year I allowed myself to become immune to the cultures and the countries in which we were working in and it took me a couple of X Games editions to remember that people don’t work the same way in different countries. Mistakes, usually they come about by some kind of arrogance. At some points you think you are better than you are in a situation. I was successful motorcycle dealer in the ‘90s with a Yamaha shop in Las Vegas. We sold thousands of bikes. We then started another shop in Florida seven or eight years later thinking it would be exactly the same: big mistake. It was a different time. We had to relearn a lot of things. It has been OK, but not as successful as being in Vegas in the ‘90s.

The U.S. Open was a big turn in the motorcycle scene in America but it took me years to put my foot in the door at the MGM [hotel]. They had no reason to trust a crazy French guy who was a motorcycle dealer in Vegas. So they basically asked me to finance it completely. We had to give them the ticket sales and all the cash flow was on their side because they were absolutely convinced that it wouldn’t stand a chance. So we sold the dealership to help us bankroll the race and after that we got everything back and more. However you have to be in your thirties to be able to do that! My wife and I think now ‘we were so crazy then’. We put everything we had on the table, but it came back.

Hard work is so important. I am convinced that I am not lazy now! I usually do what I say and say what I do; that’s my line. Until you actually do something then it is not done. I won’t talk too much about this and that, but I will tell you that I’m working on something. People can never be humbled enough and that is a big key. The world is a big place. ‘Our’ world [motorcycle racing] is sadly shrinking a little bit and that is the reality. We have to work hard to make it survive.



FEATURE



Talking about skill sets... I think one of my strengths is knowing my limits. When I was a racer I was very controlled and the same as a businessman. People look at you like you're an insurance package for an event. A while ago I was a producer for a lot of Philip Morris Adventure Tours and the boss from there said to me 'you're my insurance, I don't need to go there' and that was heavy! It is what people want: someone they can trust, and they pay for that. You have to know sometimes that your shoulders can take it. Some people sometimes overload themselves to a point where they don't know what they are doing. I have always been a bit fortunate to be able to know when to say 'that's enough'. When you are freelance it is like surfing. You jump in the water and you can have a big wave, small wave or no wave, you have to be ready to ride anything. Sometimes you can spend hours in the water waiting for a wave and life is the same way. Right now I have a lot of big waves coming and I'm riding them the best I can.

I needed a break and took one year out. I came back with a lot of ideas. I returned to work on July 11th and on the 14th ESPN were re-hiring me for the X Games so there was not much time to think! I would say that break made me reflect on how lucky we are in the western side of the world and I wanted my kids to appreciate that. Going to China and all these places felt good, to get some perspective. I never disconnected while we were gone and I reacted to every single email over that period saying kindly that I was unavailable for the next few months. I remember clearly being on a hill in Mongolia and having the Bercy Supercross calling me asking for help to fix a problem while I was watching a pack of wild horses; it was amazing.



ERIC'S THOUGHTS...

On the Bercy Supercross reaching 31...

I bought a ticket to be at the first one in 1984 – the last time I bought a ticket because I was paid to be at the following ones! – and to see it now is unbelievable. I really reject the notion that supercross is not motocross. It is one sport. When I see 30,000 spectators buying a ticket at Bercy and then at Geneva and Genoa I think that motocross is doing well in Europe and there are people getting excited about it. We owe it to ourselves not to segment the sport too much because if we do that the smaller we get. This building [Palais Omnisports] is being remodelled soon I and spent a lot of my lifetime here. This is a 'Monaco' for motocross in Europe. Like Namur was. This race has done a lot of good to the motocross world and especially in Europe. What else is there compare it to? Geneva is good but it is not Paris.



On the search for sponsors in 2014...

It is harder than ever. With my knowledge and history, to see how hard it is to find money... well, I cannot believe I actually did all those years ago. For the first U.S. Open I had no credit or name but I was able to line up Microsoft, Revron and companies that hadn't been involved simply by going there and saying 'hey, let's make this happen'.



Cudby

On the successor to his U.S. Open, the Monster Energy Cup, now on its fourth year in 2014...

This year was very exciting and I liked the racing. I cannot say much about it without being emotional or critical. Maybe it went in a direction I wouldn't have forecasted but congratulations to them. I like better what I created - which was an 'American Bercy' - inside a small building and it was all about quality not quantity. The U.S. Open was created because the riders said to me 'we need something like Bercy' and it took me five years, from '90 to '95, to realise that vision. In 1995 I was driving to LA with my wife on Thanksgiving and we decided we were going to do it. They had just finished building the arena at the MGM and the location was so important. There is only one Paris Bercy Supercross and there was only one U.S. Open at the MGM. Now the Monster Cup to me is a great event but it is just another race.

On why there is no global Supercross World Championship and what could be done to get it moving...

Financial interests are just too strong. We need to have people who believe the sport can grow. We always have the financial aspect being treated before the sport. What I've learnt is that if you take the sport first then



ERIC PERONNARD

the financial side can follow. If you turn things around then it won't grow. When I sold the U.S. Open to Feld they made me Head of International business and the first thing I did was to send the President of Clear Channel to Dorna to form a partnership. Then I influenced the upper management to deal with the FIM. We had the international rounds of the supercross in Europe but that was the moment when I stepped out because I wasn't being used in the way I wanted. Sadly it didn't go to the next level or move on. I ignited the Geneva and Arnhem projects and now I really think we need to have a true world supercross series. The sport is good enough. We don't need to have one in Latvia, for example but we can have a race in France, one in Australia, one in Spain; there are at least five places in the world that can accept supercross and get excited about it. You would have to restructure the entire motocross 'world' and the different groups need to work together. We have the promoter and the performers but they are not always going in the same direction. I feel that performers always want to be more involved and maybe it will happen one day. It is a big can of worms to open!

On his thoughts about the FIM Moto-cross World Championship...

Nobody is perfect. I am a big fan of Giuseppe Luongo and Youthstream, I worked for them and was the architect for the Motocross of Nations in America. What strikes me when I come to Europe [to see the MXGPs] is the obvious visual crisis. Teams want to look big and

I think they spend too much money on trucks rather than riders. You don't need a big Semi for a rider; get a Sprinter, and then pay him! People always blame Giuseppe and it is easy to blame the promoter and 75% of my life involves taking blame but everyone has to take a rounded look at the situation. Teams say they don't have money but then they have a huge truck. That same truck doesn't make anything happen in our sport. KTM can afford it but not necessarily the satellite teams. I created the Endurocross world from scratch in the U.S. and I have been conscious of telling people that we don't need all the Semis. I'm happy to see teams with Box vans because I want the teams to come. I don't want to create a series where the first line is a millions dollars. We need to have riders being paid and we don't need the fluff. The essence of the sport is in the dirt, not in the pits. Sometimes it gets confused.





ROOKIE RULING...

By Steve Matthes

So in the last issue of OTOR I took you guys through some key questions in regards to the 2014 supercross series. It was a good read no doubt about it (patting myself on the back) but I thought I would go a bit more in-depth on the three bigger-named 450SX rookies jumping up full time into the big boys class in 2014. Let's take a closer look at Eli Tomac, Wil Hahn and Ken Roczen and what their strengths and weaknesses are or could be...

Ken Roczen: This Red Bull KTM rider and former World Champion is allegedly happy at KTM. Let's get that out of the way first. Apparently it was enough of a question that Pit Beirer felt the need to address Roczen's contentedness via a press release (I've never really seen a team put out a PR that a rider still under contract is happy and staying with the team but whatever) and I'm also glad that Kenny chose the 450 over the 350 because despite some good results on the 350 the few times he did race 450SX, the 450 ensues a much bigger chance of success.

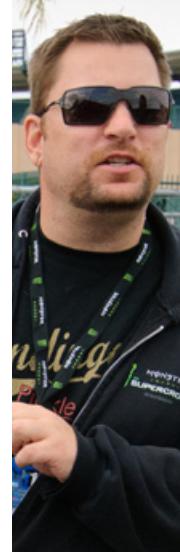
Roczen's biggest strength is his talent, he's got 'it' and there's no denying that fact. Roczen's a terrific rider and is highly skilled. But perhaps the weak link in his armor was his fitness. He was good but not great. Kenny addressed this with the hiring of trainer Aldon Baker and moving out to Florida to join Camp Villopoto. If he sticks to this, if he commits to this program (and the fun loving kid seems to be buying-in as of now but it's too early to call for the long haul) there's no doubt he should be right up there next year. Will he win a race? Tough for me to see that but he's on the right track with his decisions. The thing to watch

is 2015 when he's a free agent and - whether or not Kawasaki brings Jake Weimer back - then with RV in the last year of his contract, a friendship with Villopoto, a bike that Roczen will have no doubt ridden a few times then where does Roczen go? It's a natural fit. But that's all a year away, in 2014 he's going to be very good. If nothing else then watching him in practice will be cool because Kenny likes to have fun out there. Kenny's got to be more focused on his training and it appears that he's done that. He's gotten worn down in the nationals the last few years and now he's on a bigger bike. The grind of a full season of 450's isn't a lot of fun for these guys and Roczen's got to really work hard (and again, it appears he's knuckling down) because if you combine his talent with his work ethic then the sky's the limit.

**“Will Roczen win a race?
Tough for me to see that but
he's on the right track...”**

Eli Tomac: The GEICO Honda rider and the 2013 250MX outdoor champion was the subject of an intense bidding war for his services and eventually settled back with his old team of GEICO Honda. And the folks at GEICO are so pumped they bought a new semi truck for Tomac and Wil Hahn to set up home; GEICO Honda is going full-time 450 racing!

Let's start with this: Tomac's a hard worker. The guy's dad is John Tomac who might be one of the



gnarliest bicycle racers that has ever lived. So he knows all about training and what works for him. Tomac's really grown the last few years and on the smaller 250 he really attacked the track and was able to put the bike where he wanted to. He's probably not as naturally talented as Roczen but he's close and then there's the aggression, desire and fitness all rolled into one package. Many people believe Tomac is the next great champion of the sport - although I'm sure Justin Barcia will have something to say about that - because he's grounded, his program is solid and he's just been a winner no matter what level he's been at. Also I know this column is about supercross but Tomac's got an outdoor national title on his resume and he might be better outdoors than in.

Weaknesses? When Tomac jumped up to the 450 for four races last year he had a full factory bike. And by the end of the deal, at Daytona, he was back to a production-based Honda. He wasn't happy with the CRF450R and the bike is the reason he shopped around for a new team. So I'm not saying his bike is a weakness but it didn't work for him for whatever reason. So he's got to have complete faith that the bike is good, it's not the reason he's not winning and he's totally focused on testing. In my time I've seen and heard plenty of excuses from riders that the bike is the problem. Once a rider really believes that, it's hard to get that out of their mind.

Wil Hahn: The surprise 250SX East Coast title winner, Hahn proved that you can win your first race as a pro and then go on to win your first title. You just don't see that happen too many times but Hahn did it. He slayed the favorites (Dean

Wilson and Marvin Musquin) and took home the prize. But with the crown comes the boot out of the category (you're allowed three years in the class and then if you win the title you're booted out. Or you can seemingly finish second in the series forever and stay in the 250s. Or there's some sort of point system in place to kick riders out but no one really knows what it is and it changes all the time so I won't bother getting into it). So it's up to the 450's for Hahn. He's no stranger to the division as he filled in for Factory Honda a couple of years ago so like Tomac and Roczen, he does have some races under his belt.

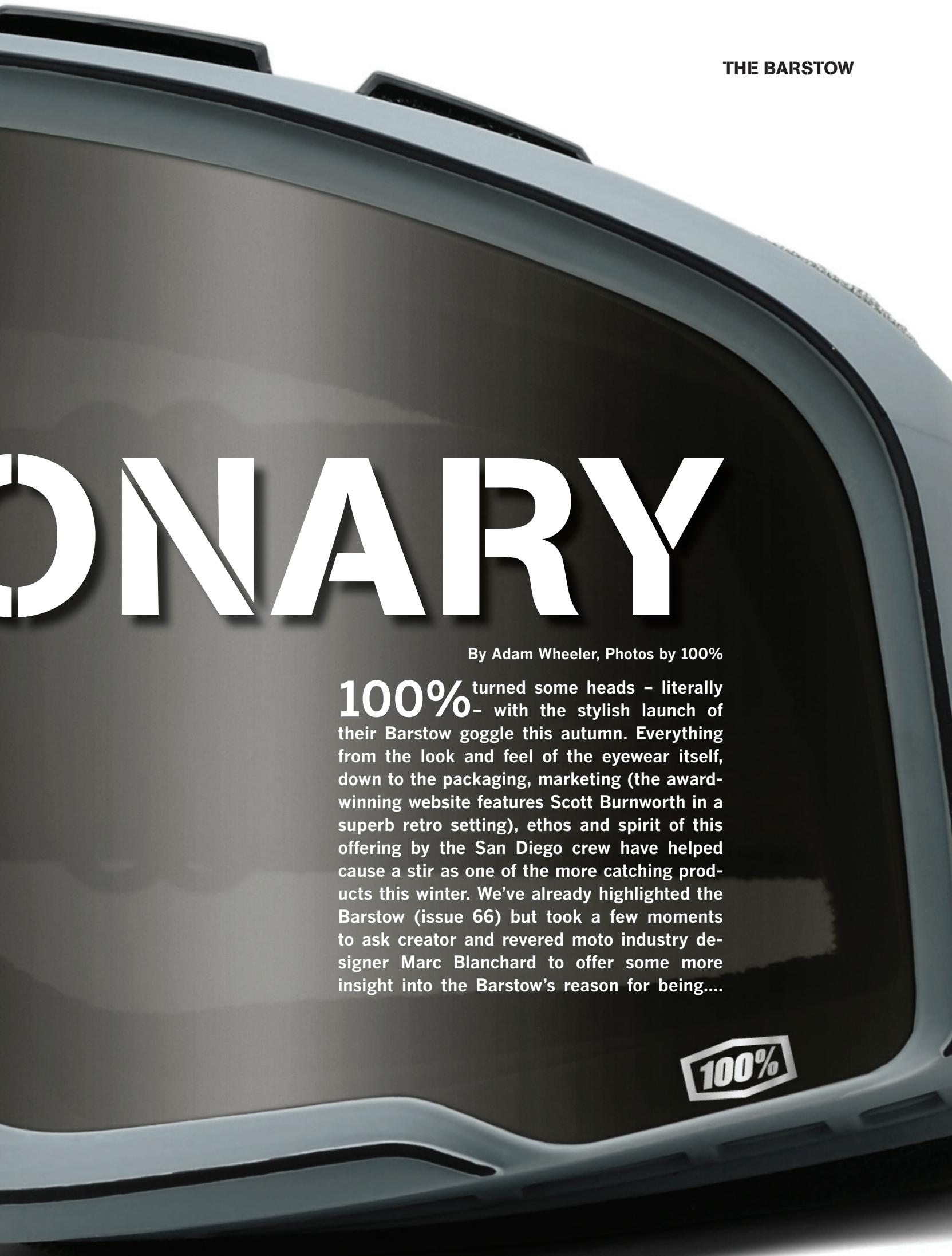
"It will be a tough test but if Hahn can get his starts down then he can be a top ten guy."

Hahn's a working man's motocrosser. He's not some amateur superstar that used his talent to win at every level he's been at. This guy's gone to hell and back with injuries, getting fired, teams folding and then more injuries. Sometimes nice guys and hard workers do get rewarded. Hahn's not on the level of Roczen and Tomac in terms of skill but he's a grafter and will give you his all at every race. There won't be many more determined guys out there I can guarantee you that. Weaknesses? Hahn's got a steep learning curve ahead of him but the good news is he'll meet this challenge head on. It will be a tough test but if he's in shape and he can get his starts down then he can be a top ten guy. To do any better, against this field of guys, would be surprise.



FEATURE

VISION



THE BARSTOW

ONARY

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by 100%

100% turned some heads – literally – with the stylish launch of their Barstow goggle this autumn. Everything from the look and feel of the eyewear itself, down to the packaging, marketing (the award-winning website features Scott Burnworth in a superb retro setting), ethos and spirit of this offering by the San Diego crew have helped cause a stir as one of the more catching products this winter. We've already highlighted the Barstow (issue 66) but took a few moments to ask creator and revered moto industry designer Marc Blanchard to offer some more insight into the Barstow's reason for being....





100% have delivered some high-performing eyewear in the last eighteen months so how was designing a product with a very distinct look and feel but still keeping that quality control?

To tell you the truth the Barstow was designed right after the Racecraft and Accuri. It just took a lot more time as we were very busy with the launch of the brand. This project was a lot of fun and a collection of all we stand for: attention to detail, quality, design, soul and passion. We did not have a particular release date set up. We launched it when the product was ready and perfect.

Considering the history of the brand is the Barstow something you were itching to create when you rejuvenated 100%?

Yes, it was in our 'to do' list from the get go. We just like to do products that we feel good about. You won't see us coming up with something dictated by the stock market or a corporate board meeting.

Is the Barstow quite niche? How happy have you been with the reception?

The reception has been incredible for us. Beside all our direct contacts in motocross that were very positive the real test was coming from the Cafe Racer movement. The most important blogs around the world have recognized the product. Most opinion leaders have contacted us to get a set. SeeSee Motorcycle, Deus, El Solitario, etc..

The attention to detail is fantastic. The Barstow could almost double as a gift for someone. Is this important to you?

We just wanted the customer to enjoy not only the product itself but the presentation as well. The entire experience is very important to us so the customers' discovery of these small details as part of the process. The website, the catalogue, the videos, all these were an integral part of the final product.

With the current motocross line and the evolving schemes and now this...where can 100% possibly head in the future? Are you still feeling inspired?

We are working hard on some future products that might surprise people. Inspiration is going rampant and I don't see an end to it. I think the only limitation is the market itself that might not be ready for some ideas...we'll see.



THE BARSTOW



PLAY





PACK LEADER



Jeffrey Herlings rules!

The unbelievable success story of KTM in the MX2 World Championship continues and the new, supreme KTM 250 SX-F is dominating the field. Jeffrey Herlings and Jordi Tixier are vying for victory.

The two of them are as athletic, quick, agile and powerful as their machines. In the hard-fought battle for every point, man and machine become an unbeatable entity.

Jeffrey takes to the start commandingly with total commitment and only one goal – the title for him and his team!

The new KTM 250 SX-F – the weapon to win!

**250
SX-F**



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Please make no attempt to imitate the illustrated riding & scenes, always wear protective clothing and observe the applicable provisions of the road traffic regulations!
The illustrated vehicles may vary in selected details from the production models and some illustrations feature optional equipment available at additional cost.

Photos: Acerbis | P. H. Mitterbauer

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FEATURE

‘13 BEST OFS

Simon Cudby covered more race weekends in the United States (and beyond) than most of the AMA racers in 2013. The Brit/long-time California resident submitted this selection from the supercross and motocross terms that spanned North America...



BUILT FORD TOUGH UNADILLA NATIONAL NEW BERLIN, AUGUST

The third to last round of the championship and Villopoto would go undefeated until the final lap at Lake Elsinore. The Kawasaki rider accumulated eighteen moto victories from twenty-four; almost a rout

2013 BEST AMA IMAGES



LAS VEGAS SAM BOYD STADIUM, MAY

Sheer joy for Wil Hahn who wasn't many people's pick as East Coast 250SX Champion with Dean Wilson and Marvin Musquin to face. In the end the Honda rider made it by just a few points and kicked off a well-earned celebration in Las Vegas



2013 BEST AMA IMAGES





FEATURE

ROCKWELL WATCHES THUNDER VALLEY NATIONAL LAKWOOD, MAY

Round two of twelve in the motocross season gets underway with the uphill drag in Colorado. The control tower on the inside of the first turn allows a perspective like this and 2013 450MX rookie Justin Barcia has been the quickest to reach the top of the incline



2013 BEST AMA IMAGES



D

FEATURE



SAN DIEGO QUALCOMM STADIUM, FEBRUARY

Typical play from Ken Roczen who gained his first win at Oakland in what would be a close duel with Eli Tomac in the West Coast 250SX season. This was taken during practice at San Diego where the German would finish second to the Honda rider

2013 BEST AMA IMAGES



MONSTER ENERGY
SUPERCHARGED

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FEATURE



LOS ANGELES ANAHEIM 1, JANUARY

First Blood for Tomac who has his eye caught by something at Anaheim. With another two victories after this performance it seemed like the champion would have an easy term but a costly crash in Oakland (just 1 point scored) would prove decisive

2013 BEST AMA IMAGES





FEATURE

RED BULL HANGTOWN MOTOCROSS CLASSIC SACRAMENTO, MAY

A moment of levity for reigning motocross champion Ryan Dungey before the first Lucas Oil Pro Motocross race of the year at Hangtown. The KTM representative would own just five motos throughout the summer but was Villopoto's nearest challenger

D

FEATURE





RED BULL HANGTOWN MOTOCROSS CLASSIC SACRAMENTO, MAY

Aside from the 'Ryans' James Stewart was the only other race winner in the 2013 MX season with his chequered flag at Spring Creek. Will 2014 see an injury-free resurgence from the former Mr Perfect (the undefeated term was in 2008)?

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FEATURE



LOS ANGELES ANAHEIM 1, JANUARY

The glitz and glamour gets ready to go for another year. The Monster girls form an undeniable part of Supercross as 2013 prepares to blast out of the gate at Anaheim 1



LOS ANGELES ANAHEIM 1, JANUARY

Crystal clear Californian skies allow a razor sharp Ryan Villopoto to hurry into view during the first laps of 2013 and the opening parries of AMA Supercross practice

D

FEATURE





BUILT FORD TOUGH UNADILLA NATIONAL NEW BERLIN, AUGUST

Justin Barcia gets the factory Honda pretty much flat in his first 450MX championship plight. The former SX title winner was a clear third place in the final standings for a solid opening crack at the outdoor premier class

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FEATURE



LOS ANGELES

ANAHEIM 1, JANUARY

Maybe only Davi Millsaps was unsurprised with his Anaheim 1 victory but the starts, speed and confidence picked up by the Suzuki man (now KTM) in Los Angeles set a template for the rest of the sixteen rounds and a deserved number 2 plate came his way





SALT LAKE CITY RICE-ECCLES STADIUM, APRIL

Chaos in the initial – and crucial – seconds of a Supercross Main Event. Sometimes it seems there is barely room to breathe, let alone gun out of the turn and set-up a pulsating charge through twenty laps without respite

2013 BEST AMA IMAGES



ALL SHOT USING:

Nikon D4 bodies, Nikon 300 2.8, Nikon 70-200 2.8,
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www.cudbyphoto.com



D TEST

BOLT FROM THE BLACK

THE S1000R SPORT IS A TECHNICALLY REFINED ADDITION TO THE NAKED STREETBIKE SEGMENT AS THE SURGE CONTINUES BY MANUFACTURERS TO GOBBLE MARKET SHARE. ROLAND BROWN EMERGES ALMOST UNSCATCHED FROM A RESILIENT FIRST MEETING WITH BMW'S LATEST FINEST

By Roland Brown, Photos by Jason Critchell



BMW S1000R SPORT



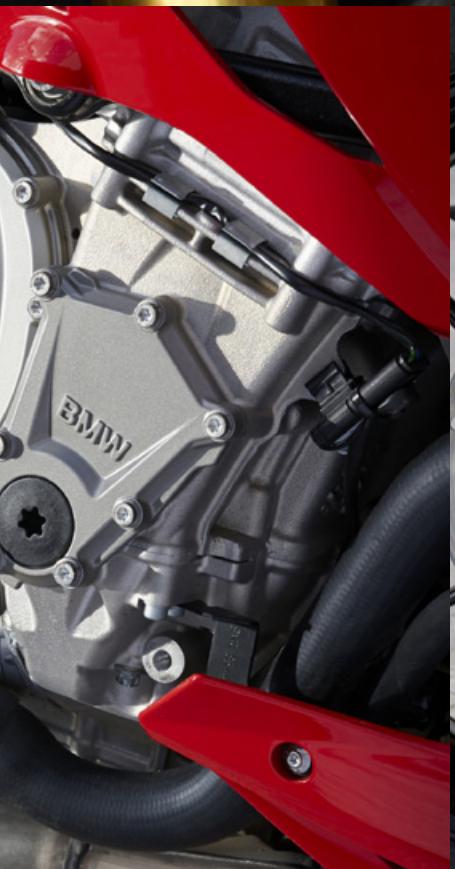
The battle lines are being drawn up for a vicious battle in motorcycling's super-naked division. Most of the leading contenders are armed with suitably aggressive names: Ducati's revamped Monster, MV Agusta's Brutale, KTM's Super Duke with its nickname of the 'Beast'. In that company, BMW's modestly titled S1000R seems almost ordinary, but a glance at its asymmetrical headlights suggests otherwise.

So does its specification sheet, and if you're not convinced by that you just have to crack open its throttle — but make sure to hold on tight. This high-barred superbike is even more than simply a stripped-down version of the S1000RR that set the super-sports world alight in 2010. It combines 160bhp performance, weight of just 207kg fully fuelled, and a list of high-tech features including the first semi-active suspension fitted to an unfaired roadster.

The engine is based on the RR's dohc, 16-valve unit and is detuned with a reworked cylinder head, new camshafts, revised injection system and redesigned four-into-one exhaust. The rev limit is reduced by 2000rpm to 12,000rpm, power output below 9000rpm is increased, and above that figure it's reduced to that 30bhp lower maximum. The twin-spar aluminium frame is based on the RR's, revised with slightly more relaxed steering geometry and a longer wheelbase to give extra stability with the high bars and exposed riding position.



BMW S1000R SPORT





In many markets (including the UK) the S1000R comes in two versions. The standard model has two riding modes and BMW's basic ASC traction control. The higher specification S1000R Sport adds two more riding modes, a quick-shifter, the more sophisticated Dynamic Traction Control, colour-matched belly-pan, and Dynamic Damping Control semi-active suspension. (In some markets there are accessory packages that include these features, rather than a specific Sport model.)

Even the base S1000R is a sophisticated bike with engine modes of Road and Rain, selectable via a button on the right bar. The latter gives softer delivery to a lower 136bhp maximum, and differing level of traction control. The Sport's extra modes, Dynamic and Dynamic Pro, are for sporty riding. They're also linked to the Dynamic Traction Control, which as with the S1000RR is governed by a lean angle sensor.

The Sport's DDC semi-active suspension — based on the system introduced a year ago on the super-sports HP4 — automatically adapts damping levels to suit the riding situation. Brembo's linked brake system with radial four-piston front calipers and ABS comes as standard. The ABS settings also vary with riding mode, with Dynamic Pro disabling rear wheel anti-lock to allow skids.

The riding position is typically upright, with an easy reach to the bars and a fair bit of legroom despite fairly high and rear set footrests. The engine is powerful, smooth and free-revving. The S1000R can't match the RR's high-rev power but its additional flexibility and stunning midrange response are much more useful on the road. There's very little wind protection — tiring if you're making use of the performance, but of course this adds to the sense of speed and might just save your licence.



BMW S1000R SPORT



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TEST

BMW S1000R SPORT



Throttle response is excellent in all riding modes, making for instant acceleration whether you're rolling it on from 6000rpm or revving to the redline with the help of the efficient quick-shifter. The BMW is seriously rapid and also impressively controllable, helped by the superb DTC traction control system, which is there in the background in case you need it.

Surprisingly the Sport's chassis is as noteworthy for its comfort as for the bike's handling ability. On its Road setting the BMW gives an improbably plush ride, gliding over most urban bumps. It's fine even for hard riding but press-

ing the button to select Dynamic mode firms up the suspension and gives a superbly taut and controlled ride.

Other chassis parts work well, with the Brembo radial front calipers giving predictably fierce stopping power. They are normally well backed-up by the ABS system, although I crashed after losing the front end under braking on a damp patch exiting a tunnel (while in Dynamic Pro mode, which is intended for dry surfaces). I'm still not sure why it happened but it wouldn't put me off buying the S1000R.



PLAY



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TEST





Super-naked bikes aren't bought primarily for their practicality, but the BMW is more versatile than most. Its comprehensive digital instrument panel includes information on fuel consumption plus the 17.5-litre fuel tank's range, which should approach 150 miles. The plush suspension makes the seat seem reasonably comfortable, though there's not much room for a pillion. A comprehensive accessory list includes luggage plus many performance parts.

The S1000R's final weapon is a price that's as competitive as its performance. The base model costs just under £10,000 in the UK; the Sport is less expensive than rivals such as Aprilia's Tuono V4R and KTM's 1290 Super Duke R. BMW's super-naked might not have a scary name but it's a fearsomely quick, stunningly agile, refined machine that looks like having almost as big an impact as the S1000RR did four years ago.

BOOKS...

It's December so Christmas time obviously and the annual offerings from Jonty Edmonds and his comprehensive chronicle of Enduro and Stanley Leroux's impeccable MXGP Album yearbook are again valuable material for anybody casting any eye for a moto orientated gift that doesn't involve a garment or spare part. Edmonds' **Enduro Illustrated** is the full scoop on the FIM EWC – all eight rounds – and includes the European Hard events for the first time. Over 250 images show the depth of beauty and difficulty of the race against the clock. Get it here for 25 euros:

www.enduro-illustrated.com

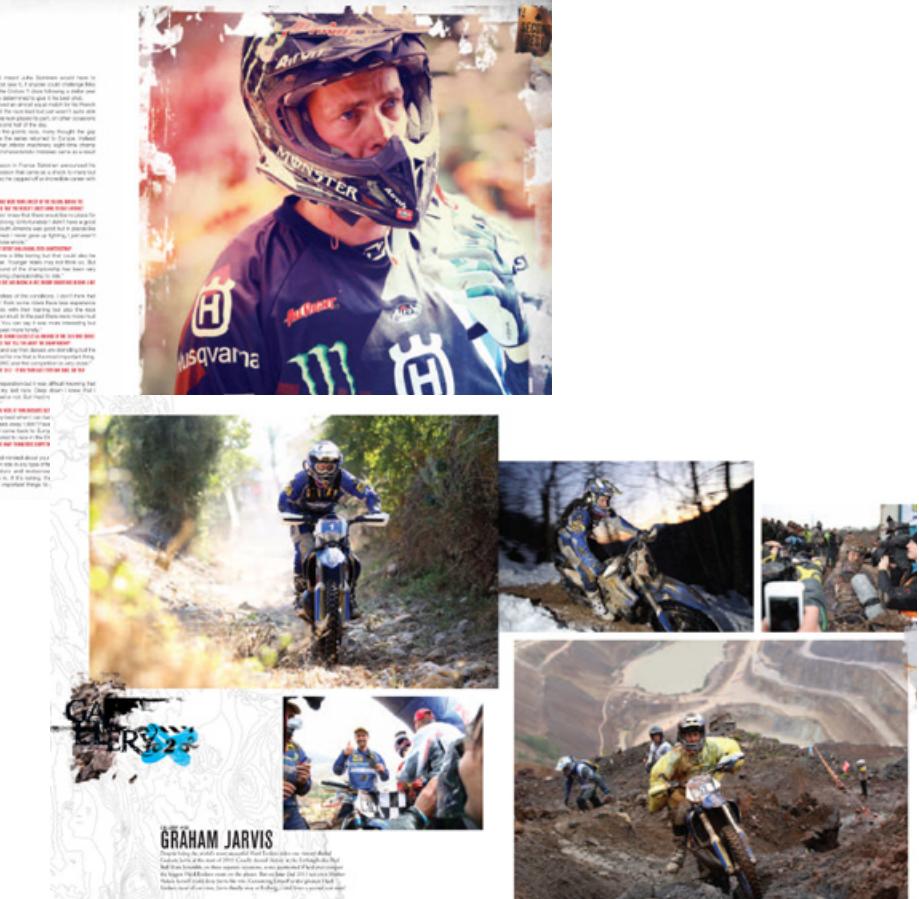
The **MXGP Album** features 240 pages covering the FIM MX trail and the glossy and impressively produced publication is now into its fifth term. Written in English and French, with fresh insight thanks to exclusive interviews, and also available in a collectable limited edition version the book is priced just under 40 euros and can only be brought here:

www.motocrossgpalbum.com





WALKER | SALVINI | HAMBOTIN





PRODUCTS





ALPINESTARS

The end of year period is one of the unlikeliest but also one of the best times to escape on the bike. To blast out some of that food and lethargy. The inescapable fact is that for the great majority of Europeans it is ball-achingly cold for the next month or two.

Solutions? We turn to our reliable friends at Alpinestars who have the answer for both men and women thanks to their **Winter Tech performance** gear (less than 130 euros for the set) and **Stella Thermal Tech Road** (110 euros) underwear. We have the summer version with the impressively engineered material and cannot wait to get our hands on the garments that boast properties like double sided moisture wicking fabric, compression fit and ergonomic flat lock seams. The men's two-piece is a tubular seamless construction made from polypropylene with elastic properties, which is also hypoallergenic and bacteriostatic; essential facets as any superhero will testify.

This uniform should assist with both on and off-road riding in the lowest temperatures but just in case you might want to zip up the **Valparaiso Drystar Jacket and pants** (a versatile all weather get-up) over the top that will do pretty much everything - insulate, regulate, waterproof and protect – for less than 500 euros for both items

www.alpinestars.com



SCOTT

Two versions of Scott's elegant and entirely functional (read: dependable) off-road gear. The **450** (here in cubic blue grey) is the top of the line. For the jersey the Scott literature offers: "The 450 Jersey is highly ventilated and features padded elbows for additional comfort. From the collar to the cuffs, this was designed with riding in mind, resulting in a super-light, super-comfortable and highly stylish jersey. Years of product testing results in performance you can count on." With an all-new fit and design the Pants are: "light and extremely breathable. They feature premium leather knee reinforcement and is specially shaped for an aggressive riding stance. Other features like a $\frac{1}{2}$ length inner mesh liner and adjustable Velcro waist tabs make the 450 Pant the most comfortable pant you'll ever ride in."

The **350** (in Armada black white) is not too dissimilar but comes at a friendlier price and the pants have a reworked component for 2014: "It features leather inner knees for added durability as well as ribbed Spandex in the knees to accommodate knee braces." We haven't got our hands on a set yet but the Scott quality stamp says a lot and the creative team split between the U.S. and Switzerland always seem to find very contemporary colours and schemes. Well worth an investigation.

www.scott-sports.com











ON TRACK OFF ROAD



'On-track Off-road' is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP.

'On-track Off-road' will be published online at www.ontrackoffroad.com every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

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